George Washington's First Moral Lesson Received From Apple, Not Cherry Tree

—By— Rene Bache

Mount Vernon Preacher Makes Out the "Father of His Country" a Prig, but Neighbors Disprove Charge.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 14.—How about that cherry tree story? Is it true? Let us go back to the original documents and find out.

The story is first told in a book, very rare, which was published in Philadelphia early in the last century. The author was one Weems, who describes himself on the title page as "Ex-rector of Mount Vernon parish."

Parson Weems says that he got the story from an "aged lady," a distant relative of the Washington family, who as a young girl had spent a good deal of her time in their house. But the tale does not begin, properly speaking, with the cherry tree incident. It starts with a moral lesson derived from apple trees.

It was on a fine morning in the fall of 1737 (according to Weems) that Augustin Washington took his little son, George, into the apple orchard. On arriving, they found the ground strewed with fruit and the trees bending under the weight of apples which "hung in clusters like grapes."

"Now, George," said his father, "don't you remember when this good cousin of yours"—the girl who was afterwards the aged "lady"—"brought you that fine large apple last spring, how hardly I could prevail on you to divide with your brothers and sisters, though I promised you that if you would but do it, God Almighty would give you plenty of apples this fall?"

Poor George could not say a word, but "hanging down his head, looked quite confused, while with his little naked toes he scratched the soft ground."

Said his father: "Now look up, my son, and see how richly my promise has been made good. You see the trees loaded with fruit—many of them, indeed, breaking down, while the ground is covered with mellow apples, more than you could ever eat in all your lifetime."

George, lifting his eyes, "filled with shining moisture, softly said: 'Well, Pa, only forgive me this time, and see if I ever be so stingy any more.'"

Receives Many Moral Lessons.

George, in parson Weems's book, is much like Rollo in the precious volume familiar to youthful readers of the last generation. He is constantly suffering from the inflection of moral lessons more or less neatly disguised—lessons which are fed to him in capsules, so to speak. But again to quote:

"'Truth, George,' said his father, 'is the loveliest quality of youth. I would ride 50 miles to see the little boy whose heart is so honest and his lips so pure that we may depend on every word he says. But, oh! how different, George, is the case with the boy who is so given to lying that nobody can believe a word he says. Oh, George, my son, rather than see you come to this pass, gladly would I assist to nail you up in your little coffin and follow you to your grave.'

"'Pa,' said George very seriously, 'do I ever tell lies?'

"'No, George, I thank God you do not, my son, and I rejoice in the hope that you never will. Many parents compel their children to this vile practice by beating them for every little fault. But when by accident you do anything wrong, which must often be the case, never tell a falsehood to conceal it, but come bravely up like a little man, and tell me of it; and instead of beating you, I will the more honor and love you for it.'"

Then Follows the Tree Story.

Whereupon follows the famous cherry tree story, which begins with the statement that when the destined Father of His Country was 6 years of age he was "made the wealthy master of a hatchet."

When George was in his 10th year, his father died of an acute attack of gout in the stomach. His mother, being left in rather poor circumstances, sent him to Westmoreland county, to live with his half brother, Augustin—one of two sons of George's father by a previous marriage.

Admired by His Comrades.

There he was sent to a more proper kind of school, and we are informed that his virtues secured the love and confidence of the boys so completely that "his word was just as current among them as law." When, about five years later, he quitted the school forever, he left them in tears for his departure.

"For (we are told) he had ever lived among them in the spirit of a brother. He was never guilty of so brutish a practice as that of fighting them himself; nor would he, when able to prevent it, allow them to fight one another. If he could not disarm their savage passions by argument he would instantly go to the master and inform him of their barbarous intentions."

Thrashes a Butcher.

It is certain that Washington later in life was by no means so self controled. He had rather a violent temper, and could swear like a trooper. On one occasion he found a pet deer from the Mount Vernon estate hung up for sale in a butcher's shop in Alexandria, and was so enraged that he thrashed the butcher within an inch of his life. One may easily imagine what his feelings would have been if he had lived to read parson Weems's description of him in boyhood as a sneak and telltale!

Weems, in further describing this amiable trait of young Washington, says: "The boys were often angry with George for this, but he used to say, 'Angry or not angry, you shall never, boys, have my consent to a practice so shocking—shocking even in slaves and dogs; then how utterly scandalous in little boys at school. And what must be the feelings of our tender parents when, instead of seeing us come home smiling and lovely, as the joy of their hearts, they see us creeping in like young blackguards with our heads bound up, black eyes, and bloody clothes!'"

Washington's school training never got beyond the three R's. We are informed that his teacher in Westmoreland county knew no Latin; in fact, that he "understood as little of it as Balaam's ass."

Plays Soldier.

"Born to be a soldier, Washington (according to the same authority) 'early discovered symptoms of nature's intention toward him.' In his 11th year, while at school, he used to divide his playmates into two parties or armies, which respectively represented French and Americans. A big boy named William Bustle commanded the French; George, of course, was in command of the American forces. Every day at play time, with corn stalks for muskets the two armies would turn out and march, counter march, or fight their mimic battles with great fury.

Says Weems: "Such trifling play as marbles and tops he never could abide. They did not afford him exercise enough. At jumping with a long pole, or heaving heavy weights, for his years he had hardly an equal. And so to running, the swift footed Atalanta could hardly have matched his speed."

Inherits Father's Strength.

Col. Lewis Willis, a playmate and kinsman of George, told Weems that he had often seen young Washington throw a stone across the Rappahannock, at the lower ferry of Fredericksburg. This is evidently the original of an oft repeated and more or less garbled anecdote, which has given rise to the joking comment that "money went farther in those days."

We are informed that George's father before him was a man of extraordinary strength. His fowling piece was of such weight that "not one man in 100 could fire it without a rest; and yet it is said he made nothing of holding it off at arms length and blazing away at the swans on the Potomac, of which he was known to kill seven or eight at a shot."

Gets Smallpox in Bermuda.

George's half brother, Lawrence, was overtaken by consumption, and, being sent by the doctors to Bermuda for his health, he took George with him. George caught the smallpox in Bermuda, which, says Weems, "marked him rather agreeably than otherwise." George could not even have the smallpox without being improved by it; but, as annalists of his times aver, he bore plainly the marks of the disease to the end of his life.

When he came back from Bermuda, George was just entering upon manhood. He obtained employment as a surveyor from lord Fairfax, who was proprietor of all the lands known as the Northern Neck of Virginia and lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock. That nobleman, by the way, had been disappointed in a love affair, it was said, and on that account had left England to come to America, and take up this grant made to him by the British crown. In employing George, little did he imagine that he was helping to educate a youth who was destined one day to dismember the British empire. It is related that, on hearing of the capture of Cornwallis and all his army, he called out to his body servant, "Come, Joe! Carry me to bed, for I'm sure 'tis high time for me to die!"

Starts to Join English Navy.

When George was in his 15th year, England plunged into a war with France and Spain. His brother, Lawrence, got him a berth as midshipman on a British ship of war, the appointment being deemed very desirable because of the promise it afforded of future advancement. His trunk and clothes were actually sent aboard. But when he came to take leave of his mother, she wpt so bitterly, telling him that her heart would break if he left her, that he had his trunk brought ashore again and gave up the project.

Washington was hardly more than a boy—only 19 years old—when he was appointed major and adjutant general of the Virginia forces in the Northern Neck, with pay at £100 per annum.

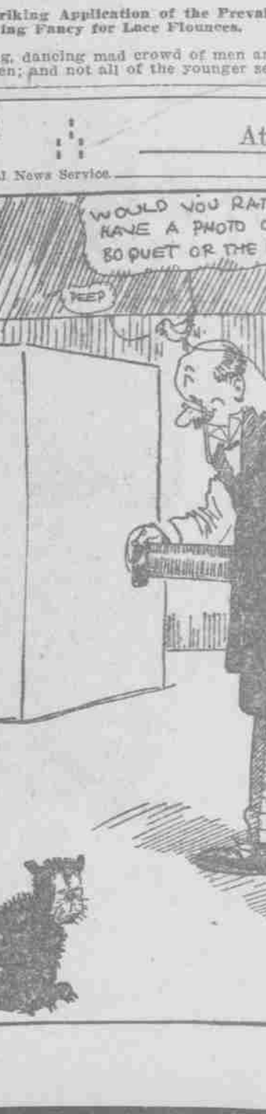
Fashion Gatherings At the Dansants

Taffeta, Changeable and Plain, a Popular Material for Dancing Frocks; Ruffles a Spring Fancy.

NEW YORK, Feb. 14.—The craze for dancing seems to have taken the world by storm. It is no longer the whim of a few, but of the many. For some time the large restaurants have cleared a dancing place that their patrons may enjoy a between course feast of the one step, the Boston dip, or the much maligned tango. The hotels, feeling that they were losing patronage, racked their brains for some method of bringing the people back to their folds, in their turn instituted The Dansant, or Tango Tea.

Between the hours of four and six the tea rooms are filled with a music loving, dancing mad crowd of men and women; and not all of the younger set, either. It is at these gatherings that one may see the latest afternoon styles.

Ruffles a Popular Feature of the Taffeta Dancing Frock.



A Striking Application of the Prevailing Fancy for Lace Flounces.

I feel like a drab mouse sipping my tea in a corner while watching gaily dressed couples pass back and forth in the steps that seem at once so simple and so intricate.

It is, I thought, no wonder slashed skirts continue to be the mode; for how could a woman achieve the different steps of these new dances in the narrow skirts of the period without them? There is no gainsaying that the vogue for dancing has influenced dress very strongly, even the dress of those who look upon the modern dance with disapprobation.

Taffetas in colors grave and gay are prominent at all the dancing teas. A striking changeable silk frock especially caught my eye the other day. It was worn by a young woman who sailed gracefully by my corner table leaving a breath of her joyous personality behind. I sketched the frock as it appears in our first illustration.

The bodice is large and blousy—yet not too loose—with fulness enough that the edges of the surplice front are gathered to form a frill of the material, the only trimming. The sleeves are short and finished with a similar frill. The skirt is trimmed with two wide bias ruffles, which drop lower on one side than the other. To be strictly a la mode, no two sides of a dress should be the same. The most striking feature of this frock, the one which gives it a touch of distinction, is a broad ribbon sash of brilliant oriental coloring. The ends hang down far behind, and are finished with tassels.

On her dainty feet, which tripped so lightly to the time of the music, were black satin slippers. A silver buckle, with rhinestones, ornamented the slippers, and the ribbon lacings were passed through silver clasps instead of the old fashioned eyelet.

There is no lessening of the popularity of fur, even with the approach of spring. It is to be seen among the advanced displays, modestly combined with cotton fabrics as well as silk and wool. Marabout will pribably have its vogue for summer wear.

Another young woman wore the charming frock pictured in the second sketch. This shows a handsome development of crushed raspberry crepe de chine, brown fur and creamy net lace. The square neck, sleeves and tunic are edged with bands of fur, and from beneath the tunic falls a ruffle of handsome net lace. The fur at neck and sleeves is softened by frills of the lace. A wide panne velvet girdle of a deep raspberry color enriches the waist, and just above it a band of brown fur gives a unique finish. The slippers worn with this dress matched the girdle and were worn over white silk stockings.

Another attractive frock was of creamy printed silk having apple green as the predominating color in the pattern. This was trimmed with a Japanese standaway collar of green taffeta, and double panniers on the skirt also of green taffeta. This is but one of many combinations. I have seen taffeta dresses trimmed with circular ruffles of velvet and, vice versa, taffeta ruffles on velvet skirts. White net tunics with taffeta ruffles are another of the whimsical old lady fashion' latest fads.

Very pretty and graceful is the fad of wearing scarfs of chiffon, lace and tulle. An orange colored scarf worn with a black or taupe dress will do as much in adding the striking motif to the costume as a brilliant sash. Some scarfs are plain; others are double, pink on one side and green on the other, or brick color on the under side and black on the upper—merely a question of taste and contrast. There are wonderful imported scarfs with borders of gold and silver brocade, and others of net with a charming allover design of multicolored beads.

A little earlier this same day, while looking through the French salon of a prominent store, I saw a dress skirt with alternate ruffles of pink chiffon and black tulle. The waist had a loose pink chiffon underbody and looser outside portion of black tulle with long flowing sleeves, the pointed ends of which reached the bottom of the skirt.

The waists are noticeably plain, while the upper portion of the skirts are befrilled and berutfled. Slowly the trimming will descend, however, for double box pleated ruffles are being placed around the bottom of silk skirts. For evening wear wreaths of tiny chiffon flowers adorn the center of the ruffle. These same box pleated ruffles of ribbon accentuate the smartness of chiffon or net tunics.

The most beautiful white suits are being shown for early spring wear. They are usually of wide wale Bedford cord, serge and duvetyne. Wide ribbon sashes of bright green, cerise or yellow are worn with these dresses; the more brilliant and startling the color the more fashionable the suit. Some of these suits are lined with silk the same color of the sash, but this is impractical for a white suit, which is bound to have many cleanings. Others are trimmed with brilliant box pleated frills above the cuffs and cords of color following the closing. Among these suits the short coat was much in evidence—short at least in front, sometimes quite long in the back.

Bright blues, greens, yellows, purples and reds are very popular for lining dresses and suits. If you wish to freshen last fall's dress for this spring's wear, just finish every available place with a facing of contrasting satin—and don't be afraid to let it show!

THE HELMET OF MINERVA

Described by Olivette

THE Helmet of Minerva is the latest hat to be adopted by the wise Parisian beauties who have decided that the women of the 20th century may learn something from the Goddess of Wisdom.

The hat is a close-fitting turban of black panne velvet, arranged in most original folds. It sweeps down above the forehead like the visor of Minerva's helmet in front and folds out over the classic Psyche knot of hair at the back.

In our picture you have three angles of vision and two styles of trimming for this little hat of classical beauty.

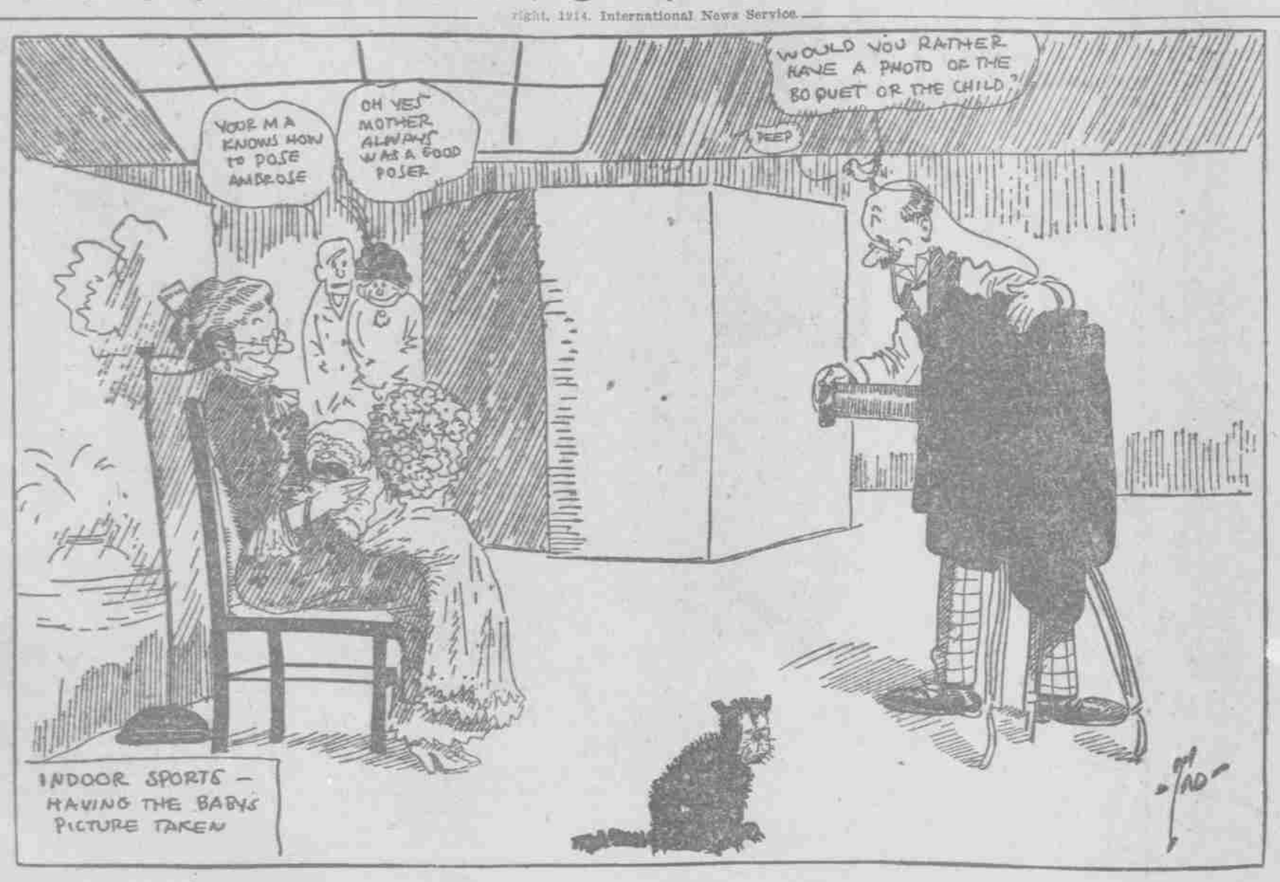
At the left is a back view, showing the psyche of hair topped by the helmet, trimmed in three soft fronded plumes. At the right is a profile view of the hat trimmed most appropriately with two Mercury wings, one of which follows the flare of the hat and the other of which decorates the crown. This view also shows the strap of the helmet lying under the hair, instead of under the chin a la our modern "Tommy Atkins."

In the middle is a front view which gives an adequate idea of the becomingness of the soft velvet folds and Mercury wings to the oval face of classical loveliness.

OLIVETTE.

INDOOR SPORTS

At the Photographer's.



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